



: Tuberculosis; Mycobacterium tuberculosis; Multidrug-resistant TB; Diagnosis; Treatment; Prevention; Bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine; Public health; Infectious disease; Global health; Antimicrobial resistance; Healthcare infrastructure; Epidemiology; Transmission; Sputum smear microscopy; Culture; Molecular assays

cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), an estimated 10 million people fell ill with TB in 2020, with 1.5 million succumbing to the disease [4]. TB disproportionately affects low- and middle-income countries, where factors such as poverty, malnutrition, HIV/AIDS, and limited access to healthcare contribute to its prevalence. Furthermore, the emergence of drug-resistant TB poses a significant challenge to TB control efforts, requiring complex treatment regimens and straining healthcare systems.

TB is primarily transmitted through the inhalation of airborne droplets containing *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. When an infected individual coughs, sneezes, or speaks, the bacteria are expelled into the air, where they can be inhaled by others. Once inhaled, the bacteria travel to the lungs, where they invade and replicate within macrophages, the body's immune cells. In some cases, the immune system is unable to contain the infection, leading to the development of active TB disease. Factors such as malnutrition, HIV infection, diabetes, and immunosuppressive medications increase the risk of progression from latent TB infection to active disease.

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TB can affect any part of the body, but it most commonly affects the lungs, causing pulmonary TB. Symptoms of pulmonary TB may include cough, fever, night sweats, weight loss, and hemoptysis (coughing up blood). Extra-pulmonary TB [5], which affects organs outside the lungs, can present with a wide range of symptoms depending on the site of infection. Diagnosis of TB typically involves a combination of clinical evaluation, radiological imaging, microbiological testing (such as sputum smear microscopy and culture), and molecular techniques (such as nucleic acid amplification tests).

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The treatment of TB relies on a combination of antimicrobial drugs, typically administered over a period of six to nine months. The most common first-line drugs include isoniazid, rifampicin, ethambutol, and pyrazinamide. Treatment regimens for drug-susceptible TB are highly effective when taken as prescribed. However, the emergence of drug-resistant TB strains, including multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) and extensively drug-resistant TB (XDR-TB), presents a formidable challenge to TB control efforts. Management of drug-resistant TB requires prolonged treatment with second-line drugs, which are often more toxic, less effective, and more expensive than first-line drugs [6].

Preventing the spread of TB requires a comprehensive approach that addresses both biomedical and social determinants of health. Key strategies include early detection and treatment of TB cases, contact tracing and screening of high-risk populations, infection control measures in congregate settings, and vaccination with Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) in high-risk populations. Furthermore, addressing social determinants of health, such as poverty, malnutrition, and HIV/AIDS, is crucial for reducing the burden of TB.

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